

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Eureka School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2005-2006**

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**Dates of On Site Visit:** October 8, 2005

**Date of Report:** December 23, 2005

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- data
- Comprehensive plan
- News release
- Screening announcement
- Radio announcement
- File reviews

- Enrollment Data
- Annual application for IDEA funds
- OSEC procedure manual
- Student referrals
- District staff surveys
- Preschool screening list
- Student referral list
- Parent surveys
- Teacher/administrator surveys
- Data table I, age and placement alternatives
- File reviews
- Parent rights brochure
- Data by age and placement alternative
- District dropout rate,
- SAT 9 data
- Staff interviews
- Exit data table H
- Student file reviews
- Content standards
- Suspension and expulsion data
- Staff certification
- CSPD needs assessment data
- Contract staff licenses
- District supervision/evaluation policy

### **Promising Practice**

Discrete Trial Training: Behavioral Attending.

This is a method used to change behavior in individuals with autism spectrum disorders. The behavioral attending program establishes, through a systematic trial-by-trial approach using (shaping, prompting, prompt fading, and specific consequences) a set of responses to a cue, which effectively eliminates incompatible and/or inappropriate behaviors in the learning situation. In effect, the teacher or parent gains instructional control over the child's behavior, enabling more specific teaching to proceed. Upon completion of the program, the child will, on cue, sit quietly with hands in their laps, feet down and maintain eye to eye contact for three consecutive seconds within five seconds of a verbal cue, with a percentage greater than or equal to 80% correct trials over two sessions with two different adults, in two different settings. The goal of DTT is that the student will eventually perform the tasks under naturally occurring reinforcers and schedules of reinforcement.

### **Meets Requirements**

The school district has an established and effectively implemented ongoing child find system to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years who may need special education.

The district has an effective referral system in place to ensure students are identified without unnecessary delay.

There are no private schools in the district.

When the school district refers or places a child with disabilities in a private school or facility, the school district ensures special education and related services are provided in accordance with requirements of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

The district uses data based decision-making procedures to review and analyze school district-level data to determine if the school district is making progress toward the state's performance goals and indicators.

The district reviews and analyzes discipline data and revises policies/procedures if significant discrepancies are occurring between the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for children with and without disabilities.

The school district ensures they employ or contract with an adequate supply of personnel who are appropriately supervised, and fully licensed or certified, to work with children with disabilities.

The district implements procedures to determine personnel development needs and take appropriate action to meet those identified needs.

### **Needs Improvement**

The district does not have an effective pre-referral system in place, which assists classroom teachers in working with student exhibiting difficulties, while also addressing the potential need for special education. The school district is investigating a more formal pre-referral system by looking on this web site: [interventioncentral.org](http://interventioncentral.org).

Not all teachers felt they have adequate training, information, and supports to implement student IEPs.

The district will make a conscious effort to train teachers, give them information and supports to implement student IEPs.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team agrees with all areas that the Eureka steering committee felt meets requirements.

While the team agrees that the use of Discrete Trial Training is an excellent research based intervention that has shown to have good results with autistic children, the review team feels this is an area that meets requirements rather than being a promising practice.

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team feels that Eureka does have an effective pre-referral system in place, which meets requirements rather than Needs Improvements.

Since the Eureka district has pledged to make a conscious effort to train teachers, give them information and supports to implement student IEPs, the review team feels that this is an area that meets requirements rather than being an area that needs improvement.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Child count data
- District budget
- Annual IDEA application for funds
- Parent surveys
- Age and placement data table I
- Student file reviews
- Suspension/expulsion data tables C

### **Meets Requirements**

The school district provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities.

The school district ensures eligible children with disabilities who may be suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative school days are provided FAPE.

### **Areas that need improvement**

There was no evidence of informed parental consent for the provision of ESY services for one student or whether the student was in need of ESY.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee that it provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities and district ensures that all eligible children with disabilities who may be suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative school days are provided FAPE and thus Meets Requirements.

#### **Needs Improvement**

The review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee that they insure informed parental consent is provided for the provision of ESY services for all students who require it.

## **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- District evaluation list
- Comprehensive plan
- Student file reviews
- Compliance monitoring report
- Interview
- District procedure

- Monitoring report
- Parent surveys
- Teacher surveys
- Cooperative forms
- Evaluation list
- Evaluation manuals
- Eligibility technical assistance guide
- Override procedures
- MDT report form
- Table A general district information
- Prior notice/consent form

### **Meets Requirements**

The school district provides appropriate written notice and obtains informed consent before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or reevaluation.

The district ensures the evaluation or reevaluation procedures and instruments meet the minimum requirements for all students except students of transition age.

The school district ensures the proper identification of students with disabilities through the evaluation process for all students except students of transition age.

The school district ensures reevaluations are conducted for all students except for those students of transition age in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continuing eligibility.

### **Areas that need improvement**

The school district needs to provide better justification to improve override procedures.

The school district needs to provide objective data to support override decisions.

### **Areas out of compliance**

Transition assessments need to be administered prior to the student turning 16 years of age and must include relevant functional and developmental information including how the child will be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum.

The school district needs to conduct adequate evaluations given to the parents of transition students used to develop eligibility for transition students. Functional assessment data needs to be summarized in a report.

Transition evaluations need to be administered to students prior to age 16.

Medical documentation needs to be provided for students if the disability category warrants it.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

Based on interviews with school personnel and file reviews, the review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee's findings under Principle 3 appropriate evaluation process that meets requirements.

#### **Needs Improvement**

The review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee that the school district needs to provide better justification to improve override procedures and needs to provide objective data to support override decisions.

## **Areas out of compliance**

### **ARSD 24:05:27:13.02. Transition services**

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

In the four files of students who were of transition age, a transition evaluation that addressed all areas of transition was not completed, there was not a coordinated set of activities toward the areas of interest, and the course of study was not complete. Therefore, the review team agrees with Eureka's steering committee's findings that the area of transition services was not appropriately addressed during the evaluation process and is out of compliance.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- OSEC procedure manual
- Parent rights brochure
- Prior notice form
- Surrogate parent technical assistance guide
- Prior notice/consent form
- Student file reviews
- Data table L, complaints and hearings

### **Meets Requirements**

The school district ensures parents are informed of their rights under Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

The school district ensures the parents have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication (if necessary) of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought.

The school district provides the parents of a child in need of special education or special education and related services with the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free appropriate public education.

The school district has policies and procedures in place for responding to requests for due process that ensure compliance.

### **Needs Improvement**

Consent needs to be signed for ESY on the IEP.

The school district needs to obtain and have on file a list of individuals who would serve as a surrogate parent if needed.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team agrees with all areas that the Eureka steering committee felt meets requirements.

#### **Areas that need improvement**

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee in that all cases where a child has been determined to qualify for ESY, Consent needs to be signed for ESY by the parent on the IEP.

#### **Out of Compliance**

##### **ARSD 24:05:30:15 Surrogate parent**

Each school district shall establish procedures for the assignment of a surrogate parent to ensure that the rights of the child are protected if no parent can be identified and the district, after reasonable effort, cannot discover the whereabouts of a parent or if the child is a ward of the state. The district shall ensure that the person selected as a surrogate has no interest that conflicts with the interest of the child the surrogate represents and has the knowledge and skills that ensure representation of the child. The district is responsible for the training and certification of surrogate parents and shall maintain a list of persons who may serve as surrogate parents. A person assigned to be a surrogate parent may not be an employee of a public agency that is involved in the education or care of the child.

Through interviews and file reviews, the monitoring team decided that the district has not trained or certified surrogate parents and does not have a list of individuals who may serve as surrogate parents.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Teacher surveys
- Parent surveys
- Student file reviews
- Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information
- Hearings
- Monitoring
- OSEC procedure manual
- Prior notice form

### **Meets Requirements**

The district ensures that written notice is provided for all IEP meetings, and includes all required content. The district ensures the IEP team is comprised of appropriate team membership and meets all identified responsibilities.

Student centered life-planning outcomes for independent living were documented for students 14 years old. A course of study was developed for students beginning at age 14. The district has policies and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student.

### **Areas that need improvement**

If needed, representation from other agencies will be invited to attend meetings for students of transition age. The frequency of modifications cannot be identified “as needed” on IEPs. Modifications provided for state/district assessments need to be noted on the modification page of the student’s IEP. When the IEP team determines ESY services are required, signed consent needs to be documented in the students file. IEPs need to contain a written justification describing why instruction could not be conducted in the regular classroom setting.

### **Areas out of compliance**

The present levels of performance on IEPs need to contain specific skills in the areas of suspected disability, the student’s strengths, weakness, the student’s involvement in the general curriculum and parent input. Present levels of performance on IEPs are to be linked to functional evaluation. Goals need to be linked to the present levels of performance and contain skill areas of concern on IEPs and need to consistently contain skill based, measurable/observable annual goals. IEPs need to consistently contain measurable short-term objectives that include the conditions, performance and criteria.

The district needs to ensure that transition plans for students are a coordinated set of activities, reflecting student strengths and interests, to prepare them for post school activities.

Transition assessment need to be administered for students 16 years old. Transition services need to be appropriately addressed in the IEPs of students age 16. Transition needs need to be evaluated for students of transition age. The IEPs of students of transition age need to include the present levels of performance from which to develop a coordinated set of activities.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team agrees with all areas that the Eureka steering committee felt meets requirements.

#### **Areas that need improvement**

Based on interviews with school personnel as well as file reviews, the review team found that, with the exception of transition, the concerns in the areas listed as needing improvement were not systemic in nature; therefore, they agrees with the steering committee’s conclusions.

#### **Areas out of compliance**

##### **ARSD 24:05:27:01.03. Content of individualized education program**

Each student's individualized education program shall include a statement of the student's present levels of educational performance.

Based on interviews with school personnel and file reviews, the review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee that the present levels of performance on IEPs need to contain specific skills in the areas of suspected disability, the student’s strengths, weakness, the student’s involvement in the general curriculum and parental input; that present levels of performance on IEPs are to be linked to functional



evaluation; and that goals need to be linked to the present levels of performance and contain skill areas of concern on IEPs. In five out of eleven files reviewed this was not the case. In general, strengths and needs were not skill specific, and were not linked to the functional evaluation.

#### **ARSD 24:05:27:01.03. Content of individualized education program**

Each student's individualized education program shall include a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives.

Based on interviews with school personnel and file reviews, the review team agrees with the Eureka steering committee that IEPs need to consistently contain measurable short-term objectives that include the conditions, performance and criteria and that IEPs need to consistently contain skill based, measurable/observable annual goals. In five out of eleven files reviewed this was not the case. In general, IEPs did not consistently contain skill based, measurable/observable annual goals that were linked to the functional evaluation (e.g. "Student" will pass his classes with a 70% or above, 100% of the time 4/4 quarters).

#### **ARSD 24:05:27:13.02. Transition services**

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

In the four files of students who were of transition age, a transition evaluation that addressed all areas of transition was not completed, there was not a coordinated set of activities based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and did not include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation in all areas. An example from one file of transition services included the following under employment: "Student" has been working since she was 16. No activity recommendations were included, nor the title of personnel/agency responsible, the date initiated, the projected date completed and the date completed were not included. Under independent living, the section was completely blank. Furthermore, the transition services plan content was not linked back to IEP goals. Therefore, the review team agrees with Eureka's steering committee's findings that the area of transition was not appropriately addressed on the Individualized Education Program and is out of compliance.

### **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

#### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Parent surveys
- Student file reviews
- Data table F placement alternatives

**Areas that need improvement**

The school district needs to allot time to ensure appropriate understanding of Individual Educational Plans (IEP) for all educators involved in the process.

**Validation Results****Meets Requirements**

Based on interviews with school personnel, the review team feels that the Eureka school district does allot enough time to ensure appropriate understanding of Individual Educational Plans (IEP) for all educators involved in the process. Accordingly, this issue is not seen as needs improvement, but meets requirements.